

A. "A HISTORY OF NEWTON COUNTY"

Newton County Courthouse, 101 S. Wood St.,
Neosho, MO *Artist: Billie Gofourth-Stewart*

This Newton County Courthouse Mural is the largest mural in the county. Painted in 1996 by Billie Gofourth-Stewart, with portrait assistance from Julie Olds, the mural measures 88 x 7.5 feet. It is on the main floor of the Newton County Courthouse in downtown Neosho. It covers most of the open space on the walls, and is done in five panels, each of which represent a specific period of time – ranging from 1837 to 1970. Artist Stewart paid homage to even small developments in the county. For example, the placement of a country mailbox marks the time period when rural mail delivery was instituted. Stewart captured not only the “big” historical events but also the area’s flora and fauna. Many small images in the mural will likely be lost in history since the artists hid little things in the work to mark personal friendships, relatives or other dates and events. These can be found throughout the work on such places as car license plates and in other obscure places. Many famous citizens such as George Washington Carver, Herman Jaeger, and James Scott are included, as well as a self-portrait of the artist in her blue jeans and bobby socks.

B. "TIPTON FORD"

United Methodist Church, 224 S. Wood St.,
Neosho, MO *Artist: Anthony Benton Gude*

A great tragedy, the 1914 Motor Car Wreck, was the inspiration for Anthony Benton Gude’s mural in the Neosho United Methodist Church. The idea behind the mural was to showcase the community of Christian faith and coming together of black and white citizens after a tragic train wreck near the small community of Tipton Ford. In that wreck, dozens of people were killed, many of whom were returning to Neosho after Emancipation Day activities in Joplin. Because many bodies were unidentifiable, a mass funeral was held and 33 caskets were buried together in the Neosho I.O.O.F. Cemetery. Their grave is marked with a large stone, which is depicted in the center of the mural. This marker is just inside the front gate of the I.O.O.F. Cemetery. This Tipton Ford Wreck mural, which measures 10 x 6 feet, is the second done by Anthony Benton Gude. It was dedicated on December 6, 2008, and funded by Fred Clark, Clark Funeral Homes and private donors.

Other NEOSHO ATTRACTIONS

1) Neosho National Fish Hatchery 520 East Park Street

The Hatchery was established in 1888, and is the oldest operating federal Fish Hatchery in the U.S. It provides recovery efforts for endangered Pallid Sturgeon, Paddlefish, Native mussels, Lake Sturgeon and Rainbow Trout for Lake Taneycomo, Mo.

2) Crowder College 601 LaClede Avenue

Crowder College was founded in 1963. It is named for General Enoch Crowder, a prominent Missourian, soldier and statesman. It also honors all WWII veterans who trained at Fort Crowder. Crowder College has achieved worldwide recognition for its innovative Alternative Energy Program and MARET Center. The college is also developing a Mural Art Program. Their most recent mural is “CampUs Crowder,” displayed in Newton Hall. The school’s enrollment surpassed 4,400 students in the fall of 2009.

3) Hickory Creek between Hwy 86 and College Street

Hickory Creek, a charming spring-fed stream, winds its way pleasantly through Neosho, Missouri. The name “Neosho” comes from “ne-o-zho” or “Ne-u-zuh” which are Native American derivatives meaning “clear or abundant water.” Designated as a White Ribbon trout stream, it is periodically stocked with trout by the Neosho National Fish Hatchery.

4) World’s Largest Flower Box 930 North College St.

Neosho is proud to be home of the World’s Largest Flower Box. After acquiring a railroad gondola car, it was transformed into a flower box. It’s 66 feet long, eight feet wide and 44 inches deep. The flower box is filled with flowers, shrubs, and trees and is a beautiful addition to Morse Park.

5) Big Spring Park 308 West Spring Street

One of the most photographic scenes in Neosho and a popular wedding site is Big Spring Park. Renowned nationwide for its beauty, the park features stunning gardens, picnic tables, a floral clock, a children’s wading pool and playground. It flows with springs streaming by six rose gardens and a trout pond where all can enjoy feeding the fish.

6) Lincoln School 620 Young Street

This small house holds a big treasure. Beneath the siding is the original Lincoln School where famed botanist George Washington Carver attended. Built in about 1872, it was the first Black school in Neosho, and provided Dr. Carver with his first experience in formal education. This building is the first of three Lincoln Schools in Neosho.

7) Newton County Historical Society 121 N. Washington

The Newton County Historical Society houses a wealth of information about Newton County. Included are extensive genealogical records, family history records including bibles and scrapbooks, cemetery records and of course, many artifacts dating to the beginning of Newton County.

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WALKING TOUR of THE MURALS of NEOSHO, MO



A History of Newton County



Tipton Ford



Flower Box City

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